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Canada Air Board

Government  
Publications

# REPORT

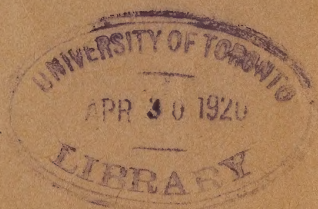
OF

# THE AIR BOARD

FOR THE

FISCAL YEAR ENDING MARCH 31

1920



OTTAWA

J. DE LABROQUERIE TACHÉ

PRINTER TO THE KING'S MOST EXCELLENT MAJESTY

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS.

	PAGE.
General . . . . .	5
Air Regulations. . . . .	5
Preliminary Surveys for Operations. . . . .	6
Scientific Research. . . . .	6
Meteorological Development. . . . .	6
Wireless Installations and Navigators' Certificates. . . . .	6
Aircraft and Equipment. . . . .	7
Mapping. . . . .	7
Canadian Air Force. . . . .	7
Aeronautic Intelligence. . . . .	7

### **AIR BOARD.**

The Right Honourable A. L. SIFTON, P.C., K.C., Chairman.

O. M. BIGGAR, K.C., Vice-Chairman.

The Honourable S. C. MEWBURN, C.M.G.

The Honourable C. C. BALLANTYNE.

Doctor R. M. COULTER.

J. A. WILSON.

E. S. BUSBY.

### **HEADS OF BRANCHES.**

Lt.-Col. R. LECKIE, D.S.O., D.S.C., D.F.C., Superintendent of Flying Operations.

Lt.-Col. J. S. SCOTT, M.C., A.F.C., Superintendent of Certificates Branch.

Major A. M. SHOOK, D.S.O., D.F.C., A.F.C., Secretary.





# THE AIR BOARD.

## • REPORT FOR 1919-1920.

### 1. GENERAL.

The Air Board Act was assented to on the 6th of June, 1919, and by Order in Council dated the 23rd of June (P.C. 1295), the Honourable A. L. Sifton was named as Chairman of the Board, Colonel O. M. Biggar, Judge Advocate General, as Vice-Chairman; the Honourable S. C. Mewburn, Minister of Militia and Defence, as the representative on the Board of the Department of Militia and Defence; the Honourable C. C. Ballantyne, Minister of the Naval Service, as the representative on the Board of the Department of the Naval Service, and Dr. R. M. Coulter, C.M.G., Deputy Postmaster General, Mr. J. A. Wilson, Assistant Deputy Minister, Department of the Naval Service, and Mr. E. S. Busby, Chief Inspector of the Department of Customs and Inland Revenue, as the remaining members of the Board.

The Board was called together immediately, and considered the organization of a staff. After consultation with the Civil Service Commission, it was decided that the work under the Board should be divided into three branches, having at their heads respectively a Superintendent of Flying Operations, a Superintendent, Certificate Branch, and a Secretary, the proposal being that the Secretary should administer the internal office organization, that the Superintendent of Flying Operations should control all civil government flying, and that the Superintendent of the Certificate Branch should conduct that portion of the administration which related to the public and was concerned with the licensing of personnel, aircraft and air harbours. The organization thus outlined was formally communicated to the Civil Service Commission on July 15, with a request that provision should at once be made for the appointment of these three officers and a medical officer for the Certificate Branch. No appointments were, however, made until after some time, and the first appointees assumed their duties as follows: On November 3, Lt.-Col. J. Stanley Scott, M.C., A.F.C., Superintendent, Certificate Branch; on November 10, Major A. M. Shook, D.S.O., D.S.C., A.F.C., and Croix de Guerre, Secretary, and Captain F. R. Smith, Medical Officer; and on December 15, Lt.-Col. Robt. Leckie, D.S.O., D.S.C., D.F.C., Superintendent of Flying Operations.

Permanent office accommodation was made available for the Board's staff only on the 24th of December.

### 2. AIR REGULATIONS.

The only step which, before the appointment of technical officers, it was possible to take in the direction of regulating and controlling aerial navigation was to prohibit dangerous flying. An Order in Council for this purpose was passed on July 7th (P.C. 1379). The drafting of a complete set of regulations was, however, proceeded with, and was completed in time for their submission to and approval by the Governor in Council on the 31st day of December. The *Canada Gazette* containing the regulations was published on the 17th of January, 1920, and at the same time there was ready for distribution a book containing not only the regulations, but also the forms settled for use under them, the Air Board Act and the Convention relating to International Air

Navigation as drafted by a sub-commission constituted as part of the organization of the Peace Conference and approved by the Supreme Council. This book has already had a wide distribution.

### 3. PRELIMINARY SURVEYS FOR OPERATIONS.

In November steps were taken to have made a preliminary survey with a view to ascertaining what public services could more efficiently, and in the broadest sense more economically, be performed by air than by existing methods. Canada was, for this purpose, divided into four parts, and ex-Royal Air Force officers borrowed or temporarily employed for the purpose. The survey was completed by the end of the year, and on January 2 these officers were assembled at Ottawa and the situation was thoroughly canvassed, with the result that it was decided that the most favourable fields for the commencement of operations were the less thickly settled and less thoroughly explored portions of Canada. An interdepartmental conference was accordingly held on January 10. An agenda for this conference including memoranda on the probable cost of operating aircraft and on their use for purposes of survey and for fire protection was distributed, and a number of places were named as possible air stations, upon the utility of each of which discussion was invited. The usefulness of this preliminary conference was reduced by the non-participation of some of the departments which it was expected would be interested, but special discussions have since been carried on with those departments which were represented and some others. Proposals have been formulated for operations next summer.

### 4. SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH.

Among the duties imposed upon the Board is that of undertaking technical research for the development of aeronautics and of co-operating for that purpose with other institutions. In execution of this duty, discussions took place with the Honorary Advisory Council for Scientific and Industrial Research, which resulted in the formation under that Council of an Associate Air Research Committee, which held its first meeting on the 7th of February. Professor A. S. Eve, Professor of Physics at McGill University, was selected as Chairman of the Committee, and Mr. R. J. Durley, Secretary of the Engineering Standards Association, as its Secretary. Other members of the Committee are Professor J. C. McLennan, Professor of Physics at the University of Toronto, and Mr. J. R. Parkin, Lecturer in the Faculty of Applied Science in that University. This Committee will work in the closest co-operation with the officers of the Air Board, and will co-ordinate aeronautic research throughout Canada.

### 5. METEOROLOGICAL DEVELOPMENT.

The importance of meteorological information to air navigation cannot be over-estimated, and arrangements have been completed with Sir Frederick Stupart looking towards the necessary developments of the meteorological reports, the undertaking of meteorological observations at air stations operated under the Air Board, and the distribution of meteorological information.

### 6. WIRELESS INSTALLATIONS AND NAVIGATORS' CERTIFICATES.

The development of air navigation will involve a considerable extension of wireless communication, and arrangements have been made with the General Superintendent, Government Radio Telegraph Service in the Department of Naval Service, for this purpose. Air pilots who require wireless qualifications will obtain them through that Department, by which will be issued licenses for the necessary installations both in aircraft and on the ground. That department has an organization extending



throughout Canada, and duplication of officers is thus avoided. Like arrangements are expected to be made with the Department of Marine and Fisheries for the issue of navigators' certificates to air pilots who desire or need them. The existing organization under that department extends throughout Canada and undertakes the examination and qualification of marine navigators. As the problems met with in air navigation are very similar to those which present themselves in marine navigation this arrangement is expected to be both economical and satisfactory.

#### 7. AIRCRAFT AND EQUIPMENT.

Negotiations have been entered into looking towards the taking over by the Air Board of the seaplane stations erected during the war by the Department of the Naval Service at Halifax and Sydney, and that portion of Camp Borden which was developed as an aerodrome by the Royal Air Force and acquired by the Department of Militia and Defence after the conclusion of the war. The equipment, which will come under the control of the Air Board from these sources, has an estimated value of \$170,000. In addition to the aircraft and equipment thus acquired, sixteen machines of an approximate value of \$100,000 are being received from the Air Ministry by way of replacement of those presented from time to time during the war to the Canadian forces through the activities of the Overseas Club, and the Imperial Government is also presenting to Canada aircraft and equipment of the value of about \$5,000,000, including 80 aeroplanes, 14 flying boats, 12 airships, 6 kite balloons, with inflating plants and sheds, 300 motor and other vehicles and a substantial amount of armament, wireless instruments, cameras, and other technical and general stores. A considerable part of this gift has already been shipped, and shipment of the remainder will not be long delayed.

#### 8. MAPPING.

At the request of the Air Board, the Dominion Geographer has commenced the preparation of aeronautical maps on the system laid down in the Convention relating to International Air Navigation. The process of completing the mapping of Canada on this system will necessarily be a very long one.

#### 9. CANADIAN AIR FORCE.

The question of the constitution of a Canadian Air Force was an early subject of consideration by the Air Board, and on December 22 there was adopted, for submission to Privy Council, a memorandum covering the general lines of the organization proposed. A final decision on this subject was, however, postponed until the general policy with regard to Canada's future sea, land and air forces was determined, and it has consequently not been possible to take any further steps in this direction. The very large number of ex-officers and airmen of the Royal Air Force in Canada are expected enthusiastically to support the proposals if it is found possible to adopt them.

#### 10. AERONAUTIC INTELLIGENCE.

The Air Board Act imposes upon the Board a duty "to study the development of aeronautics in Canada and other countries." In the execution of this duty the Air Board has had the advantage of the work done before its constitution by the Intelligence Branch of the Canadian Air Force under the Ministry of Overseas Military Forces of Canada. This Branch, during the two years of its existence in London, had collected material of very great interest and value, and its papers were, in the course of the demobilization of the Canadian Expeditionary Force, transferred to the Air Board, which also secured the services of one of the officers chiefly responsible for

its administration. The Air Board, consequently, has available fairly complete sets of drawings of almost all standard British machines, engines and equipment, with specifications for the construction of many of them, and has also an adequate collection of technical publications, reports and documents. The Intelligence Branch of the Canadian Air Force, O.M.F.C., established communication with the chief aircraft manufacturing companies, and this communication has been maintained with the result that the Air Board secures early information of developments in design and of inventions having an importance from an aeronautical point of view. With this material it is able to deal with the problems which present themselves to commercial and other companies and which require solution in connection with operations undertaken on behalf of the Government.

31st March, 1920.





